



South Mountain Corridor Study

Citizens Advisory Team Meeting, September 23, 2004
DRAFT Meeting Summary

Date: September 23, 2004
Time: 5:30 p.m.
Location: GRIC Komatke Center, Learning Center Meeting Hall

Attendees

Rock Argabright, Ahwatukee Chamber of Commerce
Kris Black, Ahwatukee Foothills HOA
Jim Buster, City of Avondale
Ron Chohamin, Lakewood HOA
Peggy Eastburn, Estrella Village Planning Committee
Doris French, Laveen Village Planning Committee

Don Jones, SW Valley Chamber of Commerce
Rudy Martinez, Ahwatukee Village Planning Committee
Robert Moss, United AZ Dairymen Association
Nathaniel Percharo, I-10 Pecos Landowners
Laura Prendergast, Laveen Citizens for Responsible Development
Julia Shepherd, City of Tolleson

Staff and Consultants

Matt Burdick, ADOT
Chris Clary-Lemon, HDR
Dave Edwards, ADOT Right of Way
John Godec, GRA
Theresa Gunn, GCI
Bill Hayden, ADOT
Larry Lindner, ADOT

Bill Rawson, GRA
John Roberts, GRIC
Ben Spargo, HDR
Bill Vachon, FHWA
Shannon Wilhelmsen, ADOT

Citizens

Larry Lee
Albert Pablo
Lisa Percharo
Myrtle Pete
Phyllis Petersen
Reed Petersen

Bill Ramsay
Lisa Sheldlo
Christopher Sokes
Wilford Wellington
Carmelita (last name not legible)

Meeting Summary: Bill Rawson, GRA

ACTION PLAN

Task/Activity	Who	When
Set date and secure meeting site for December 2 meeting	Theresa	
Comparison of 1988 and current right of way requirements	HDR	

Welcome and Introductions

John Godec began the meeting by explaining the Citizen's Advisory Team process, which began over two years ago. He explained the meeting rules of order and told members of the public who were attending that only written comments would be taken. One new CAT member was introduced – Doris French, a new representative appointed by the Laveen Village Planning Committee.

CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Question: There is a rumor that a decision already has been made on the alignment and that the study is just for show. Is that true?

Response: That is not true. No decisions have been made. We are still in the process of gathering information.

Project Status

- Chris Clary-Lemon reported that a meeting was held with Phoenix, Avondale and Tolleson to begin working on the methodology to be used in the economic impact analysis. He also said the technical team is working on the right-of-way analysis and updated traffic modeling. New aerial photography also will be prepared this fall.

Public Involvement Update

- Theresa Gunn said the Public Involvement Team is working to determine “where we go from here.” She said the next step likely will be meetings with community organizations, such as the Lions, Rotary, etc., and that those meetings should begin in the next couple of months.

Briefing on Freeway System Traffic Volumes

Chris Clary-Lemon gave a comparison of traffic volumes on the Regional Freeway System for the year 2000 with projected traffic volumes for 2025. He said the projections assume that all of the improvements in the new Regional Transportation Plan are in place. Highlights of the presentation included:

- Traffic volumes on 15 segments of the Regional Freeway System will increase by at least 50 percent and volumes will increase by 100 percent on eight segments of the system.

- The South Mountain Freeway would carry 170,000 vehicles a day in 2025, which would be comparable to current volumes on the Loop 101 at McDowell Road.
- The busiest stretch of freeway in 2000 was I-10 at 16th Street, with 262,000 vehicles a day. In 2025, 11 segments of the system will exceed that number. The Broadway Curve will carry 470,000 vehicles per day.
- MAG is still working on updated traffic models for 2030. The new models will compare traffic volumes with and without the South Mountain Freeway.

West Side Alternatives – Design Considerations

- Right-of-way requirements:
 - Current design calls for 70-foot medians instead of the 46-foot medians included in the original plans. This would provide space for the addition of HOV lanes and additional general purpose lanes in the future.
 - The original right-of-way “footprint” for the South Mountain Freeway was estimated at 300 feet, increasing to 600 feet at intersections. The current estimate is for a minimum of 225 feet and a maximum of 400 feet, increasing to 600 feet at interchanges.
 - Actual right-of-way requirements will be determined during final design.
- System and Service Interchanges:
 - System interchanges are freeway-to-freeway interchanges. Service interchanges are at arterial streets.
 - Service interchange locations are the same as those adopted in 1988, although changes are likely to be made during final design. Continuing studies and traffic simulations will show where it may be appropriate or not appropriate to locate service interchanges. The interchanges currently being considered are located at:
 - Van Buren Street
 - Buckeye Road
 - Lower Buckeye Road
 - Broadway Road
 - Southern Avenue
 - Baseline Road
 - Dobbins Road
 - Elliot Road
- Roadway Profile
 - All profiles currently being studied for the South Mountain Freeway are assumed to be at grade, passing over arterial streets and railroads, and then returning to grade. This does not preclude some sections of the freeway being depressed during final design. This will depend on such factors as the impact of the freeway on neighboring communities, construction costs, groundwater and drainage.

- **Right of Way Considerations**

Dave Edwards of ADOT Right of Way gave a briefing on right of way acquisitions. Highlights of his presentation included:

- Right of way needs will be developed during final design.
- Right of way costs will be determined by appraisals of individual parcels and will include land, improvements, damages and relocation costs.
- Landowners must be compensated for the “highest and best” use of the land.

CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Question: What can be done to deal with the Broadway Curve traffic?

Response: ADOT and the FHWA are conducting the same type of analysis that we are involved in for the South Mountain Freeway to identify potential improvements.

Question: Do the traffic projections take into consideration the growth in surrounding counties?

Response: Growth in neighboring counties will have to be considered insofar as they impact traffic in the Phoenix Metropolitan Area.

Question: How much right of way was acquired for the existing freeway system?

Response: Typically, the freeway corridor is 300 to 350 feet wide. Interchanges are much wider.

Question: Were the existing freeways designed too small? They don't seem to have kept up with demand.

Response: The existing freeways were designed in the early 1980s, based on traffic projections at that time. The region's growth has far exceeded those projections.

Question: Why weren't the HOV lanes included when the freeways were built?

Response: There was not enough money available to build the entire system, complete with HOV lanes. Current plans call for HOV lanes to be added to the entire system over the next 20 years.

Question: Will the bridge over the Salt River be designed to withstand maximum flooding?

Response: Yes. No one wants to build a bridge that will wash away.

Comment: ADOT seems to be interested only in building freeways and not looking for alternatives. We're soon going to run out of room for new freeway lanes.

Comment: Some of the public's opposition to light rail is because of the limited coverage. The perception is that they will only serve downtown Phoenix. We should build a Valley-wide system.

Citizen Questions and Comments:

Wilfred Wellington, Sacaton

Question: Is the same formula used in land appraisals on reservation lands?

Response: The same formula is used to appraise land on or off the reservation.

Bill Ramsay, Phoenix

Question: 1) Please describe methodology used to calculate traffic volumes. 2) Is the resulting number a (a) mean or (b) median?

Response: Information to be provided at the next meeting.

No name

Question: What is the cost difference between at, above and below grade elevation?

Response: Numerous factors determine construction costs. Typically, the least expensive is at grade and the most expense is depressed.

Next Meeting

December 2, GRIC Komatke Centers, Learning Center Meeting Hall.